

CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH VICTORIOUS

A Survey of the Book of Revelation

by Chris Reeves

- Part 2 -

I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. Part 1 of this series covered the church's life in Christ (Rev. 1 -3) and the church's security through Christ (Rev. 4 – 8).
- B. This lesson will cover the church's message about Christ (Rev. 8 – 11) and the church's conflict for Christ (Rev. 12 – 14).

II. THE CHURCH'S MESSAGE ABOUT CHRIST (REVELATION 8 – 11).

The New Testament church at the end of the first century was persecuted. Roman persecution would force Christians to keep quiet about Jesus, keep quiet about sin (idolatry, immorality), and keep quiet about God's judgment. These Christians needed a reminder of the responsibility to get the gospel message out - a message of warning, of repentance and victory (8:2; 10:7,11; 11:3,6,7,10,19). Trumpets in Bible times were used to call assemblies, to journey, to celebrate, and to wage war (Num.10:1-9). Trumpets were also used to warn (Ezek.33:3; Amos 3:6; Hos.5:8). Christ's message in Revelation is one of warning (8:2,6) and harsh punishment: Three "woes" (8:13; 9:12; 11:14). The severity of this divine, but partial judgment was designed to bring about repentance (9:20-21) upon the ungodly (9:4).

A. Seven Trumpets of Prophecy (8:6 - 9:21; 11:15-19).

1. Seven trumpets.

- a) The first trumpet sounded - a third of the land destroyed (8:7; see Ex. 7-12).
- b) The second trumpet sounded - a third of the sea waters destroyed (8:8-9).
- c) The third trumpet sounded - a third of the land waters destroyed (8:10-11).
- d) The fourth trumpet sounded - a third of the heavenly bodies destroyed (8:12).
- e) The fifth trumpet sounded – ungodly men tormented five months, but not killed (9:1-12).
- f) The sixth trumpet sounded - a third of the men were destroyed (9:13-21). (The six trumpets show that Rome would be judged by three things: natural calamity [1st - 4th], internal rottenness [5th], and external invasion [6th]. This judgment was divine judgment; see 8:2; 9:13-14; and 11:17-18.)
- g) The seventh trumpet sounded – the final destruction of God's enemies and complete victory over them (11:15-19). (Note that a picture of the Ark of the Covenant closes this section which puts the emphasis again on God's Word, His covenant.)
- h) Chapter 10:1 - 11:14 is an interlude between the 6th and 7th trumpets, just like Chapter 7 is an interlude between the 6th and 7th seals.

B. A Little Book of Prophecy (10:1-11).

- 1. Christ's message for all mankind must be revealed (10:1-6), heard (10:7), understood: both positive and negative (10:9-10; see Ezek.2:8-3:3), and preached (10:11).

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C. Two Witnesses of Prophecy (11:1-14).

1. Christ's message was preached in the church: a life of protection through persecution (11:1-2), a life of success (11:3-6), a life of temporary defeat (11:7-10), a life of revival (11:11), and a life of exaltation (11:12-14). Note that "two" in the Bible represents confirmation (Deut. 19:15), strength (Eccl. 4:9-12), and fellowship (Lk. 10:1). Note that 42 months (11:2; 13:5), 1260 days (11:3; 12:6), and 3 ½ years (12:14; see Dan. 7:25) refer to a time of persecution.

III. THE CHURCH'S CONFLICT FOR CHRIST (REVELATION 12 – 14).

Roman persecution would cause troubled saints to ask, "Why are these things happening to us?" "Why are we suffering?" These Christians needed a detailed instruction concerning what was going on behind the scenes. From earth's perspective, the conflict was between Rome and Christians (Rev. 1-11). But, from heaven's perspective, the conflict was between Christ and Satan (Rev. 12-22). Revelation 12-14 introduces the two armies at war: the dragon (Satan) and his allies (Rome) verses the Lamb (Christ) and his allies (faithful saints).

A. The Dragon - Satan (12).

1. His unsuccessful attack on Christ (12:1-6; see Gen. 3:15).
2. His unsuccessful attack on heaven (12:7-12).
3. His unsuccessful attack on the church (12:13-17; see 2:10).

B. The Allies - Rome (13).

1. The sea beast: blasphemous Roman authority helped the dragon (13:1-10; see Dan. 7:3-27).
2. The land beast: deceitful Roman religion helped the dragon (13:11-18; see 16:13; 19:20; 20:10).

C. The Lamb - Christ (14).

1. "And I saw..." - the 144,000 rewarded by God's judgment (14:1-5).
2. "And I saw..." - the three angels announced God's judgment (14:6-13; see 17:5,18; 18:10-21).
3. "And I saw..." - the two agents harvested God's judgment (14:14-20).

IV. CONCLUSION.

A. Lessons from the Message of Christ (Rev. 8 – 11).

1. The message of Christ comes from God (1 Thess. 2:13) and is both severe and comforting (2 Cor. 2:15-17). We need to heed the message of Christ and repent (Acts 17:30). We need to hear it and digest it (Jn. 6:53), preach all of it (Acts 20:20,27), and live it (2 Cor. 3:2-3).
2. God does not desire the death of the wicked, so he sends a message of repentance to them (Ezek. 33:11; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9). We need to remember to get the message of Christ out to the world (1 Tim. 3:15).

B. Lessons from the Conflict for Christ (Rev. 12 – 14).

1. Do not underestimate the power of the Devil / Satan: who he is (Mt. 13:39; Lk. 22:31; Jn. 8:44; 2 Cor. 2:11; 10:3-6; 11:3; Eph. 6:10ff; 1 Thess. 2:18; 3:5; 1 Tim. 3:6-7; 5:15; 2 Thess. 2:9; 2 Tim. 2:26) and how he acts (Lk. 4:1-13; 2 Cor. 4:4; 11:14).
2. Ultimate victory over the Devil is found by exercising a strong faith in Christ (Rom. 16:20; Eph. 4:27; Jas. 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8-9; 1 Jn. 5:4; Rev. 12:11,17; 13:10; 14:4,12-13).
3. If you want to be victorious, you need to respond to Jesus' blood in baptism (Rev. 12:11), remain faithful (Rev. 12:17; 13:10; 14:3-5,12-13), and worship God regularly (Rev. 14:7).